

A LOOK AHEAD

With the Nation, the Philadelphia District faces the problems and challenges of the 1970's. Undoubtedly, many are directly attributable to the increasing demands of an increasing population. The controversy generated by conflicting choices the District must make has found its paradigm in the Tocks Island Lake project, the solution to which will establish landmark decisions concerning man's responsibility to his environment. A formula must be created to resolve the basic conflict between man, the consumer and land, the supplier. The water-related problems of the Philadelphia area are the concern of the Philadelphia Engineer District. These problems are extensive and permeate every area of community life. The destinies of the river Ports and their effect on the economic life of the entire watershed may depend largely on the development of expanded facilities to accommodate new maritime delivery systems. Engineers of the District will be increasingly involved in studies treating the Delaware River channel, the development of new dredging systems and the feasibility of deepwater unloading terminals.

Projected reservoirs at Blue Marsh, Trexler, Maiden Creek and Tocks Island will attempt to satisfy the region's long range demands for water and electric power. The whole spectrum of water resources utilization will be explored in developing these impoundments; adjacent land tracts will be set aside for public use recreation areas. Integral elements of the dam designs will assure greater security against flooding; other built-in controls will regulate the quality of the water released. All feasible measures will be taken to insure the continued propagation of indigenous fish and wildlife.

The problems engendered by an increasing concentration of population are unlikely to diminish in the foreseeable future. A reversal of current growth trends through demographic patterning may not be effected for many years; the dilemma of human waste disposal demands immediate solutions. In 1971, the Chief of Engineers initiated a crash program for the study and recommendation of environmentally compatible systems of sewage disposal. (The Philadelphia Districts' Marine Design Division already had installed sewage treatment equipment aboard units of the Districts' floating plant). The Corps of Engineers is engaged in a renewed mission of environment repair; in the ecological revolution, this may be the pivotal mandate for a nation at the crossroads in its choice of lifestyles. In a program with such broad implications, the Districts' participation is inevitable.

Clearly, the Corps must expand its interaction with people at many levels of interest and concern. Articulate public interest groups, local governments, concerned citizens and those with specific problems to be solved must be heard and their opinions evaluated. The District's involvement with the community implies collaboration with other agencies concerned with the public welfare.

The frontiers of modern America are not to be found at far-flung outposts; they are in our congested midst. The outposts, cleared with axe and long rifle, have all been absorbed, and we scarcely can move without nudging our neighbors. The frontiersmen of today are the planners, serious men with grave responsibilities, whose moves are deliberate and prayerfully precise, for the balance is delicate. A chain reaction is begun by the initial opera-

tion of a dam's construction. From site excavation to impoundment, each phase of construction exacts its full measure from the environment. After the scarification, the brush burning and the stream diversion have been compensated by landscaping, vector control and fishways, the planners must address themselves to the consequences of reservoir operation. Periodic drawdowns expose many miles of shoreline, requiring studies to determine their potential for the propagation of health-managing or nuisance vectors. Scarified areas, the unwatered strand, and the dam itself require treatment to repair aesthetic damage. Provisions for the hosts of visitors drawn to the recreation areas must be sufficient to insure their long term usefulness to the public, with appropriate safeguards against the degradation of the "greenlands" environment.

Americans get what they want. The future missions of the District and the Corps will be designed, as were those of the past, to satisfy the demands of the American People. Eternally in quest of a "higher standards" of living, America at age 195 has attained affluence and, in reflection, a desire to conserve and improve the quality of life. Corps planners are sensitive to the growing public awareness of our rich national heritage, and of the desire to preserve the artifacts of earlier, less complicated eras as vestiges of our innocence.

Exhibit centers at the new reservoir sites will house displays which illustrate regional geology and reservoir function along with local lore and legend. Fossil exhibits and classified collections of local historical and archaeological merit will be given prominent display. Such a center has been installed at Beltzville Lake in Carbon County. A unique example of 19th Century technology, the Gruber Wagon Works, will be removed from its original location at Mount Pleasant, Berks County and installed, virtually intact, in the exhibit area at Blue Marsh Lake. Well-preserved 18th Century houses, especially the historic Van Campen dwellings, are earmarked for salvage and relocation from the area to be inundated by Tocks Island Lake. The Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Museum at Chesapeake City, Maryland contains the historical record of one of the Nation's most significant early transportation systems. It is situated in a building housing the 120 year old pumping plant, which the Corps of Engineers has preserved since 1919. Scores of historical and archaeological sites in the District area have been inventoried and tested in a program which has been underway since 1960. Other buildings of historic interest or significant architectural value have been thoroughly documented, measured, diagrammed, sketched and photographed in a program of cultural preservation which will be continued through the seventies and beyond.